



Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation

Overview

Emergency stabilization protects life, property and natural resources from additional damage after a fire. A key part of protecting human life and property following a fire is an early warning system that measures precipitation levels and alerts residents downstream of approaching landslides or floods. Emergency stabilization work must be completed within one year following the fire and includes early soil stabilization, invasive species treatments and adapting drainage features to handle predicted floods.

Post-fire rehabilitation work improves lands that are unlikely to recover naturally from the effects of wildfires. The work, often implemented over the course of several years following a wildfire, includes reforestation, road and trail rehabilitation, fence replacement, fish and wildlife habitat restoration, invasive plant treatments, and replanting and reseeding with native or other desirable vegetation.

Rehabilitation and Restoration Budget Summary (dollars in thousands)

Agency	FY2001	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005
USDA Forest Service	\$141,688	\$62,668	\$7,078	\$6,914	12,819
Dept of the Interior	\$66,769	\$40,000	\$19,870	\$36,523	\$24,198
Total	\$208,457	\$102,668	\$26,948*	\$43,437	37,017

*The Department of the Interior has an additional \$15.1 million in carry over funding from FY2002.

Some fires severely impact forest and rangeland resources, creating the need for emergency stabilization and rehabilitation on thousands of acres of forest and rangelands and hundreds of miles of streams, roads, and trails. Emergency stabilization work includes stabilizing slopes with log structures, straw wattles, and straw mulch; installing larger culverts to handle increased water flows; and reseeding burned areas. Additional benefits from emergency stabilization treatments included enforcement and education to protect sensitive ecosystems damaged by wildland fire from additional damage, site stabilization to protect oil and gas transmission lines from landslides, and protecting water quality by cleaning up hazardous waste in flood plains.

In FY 2005, National Fire Plan funding was used for 262 rehabilitation projects in 13 states. These projects treated nearly 254,985 acres through invasive plant control, cone and seed collection, seeding, planting, and watershed improvements. More than 900 miles of trail reconstruction, roadwork, riparian enhancement, fencing, and boundary line location were completed, in addition to repair or replacement of recreation facilities, water systems, road culverts, TES habitat structures, and other facilities and infrastructure.

There is a continued effort to reforest burned areas through a 5-year cost-share agreement with American Forests for Wildfire ReLeaf. The Forest Service and the American Forests for Wildfire ReLeaf are continuing to develop a national website to provide information on the Burned Area Rehabilitation program as recommended by the Government Accountability Office. The agency is also developing a strategy with the Department of the Interior to establish monitoring protocols to evaluate the effectiveness of post-fire treatments.